

The Persecution of the Church 31

suffer. Such a spirit could neither be bent nor broken.

Of active disloyalty to the Emperor there is absolutely no trace. Many Christian soldiers boasted of their long and honourable service in the army; civilians were willing to pay unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's. But Christ was their King. "There is but one God," cried Alphaeus and Zachaeus at Caesarea, "and only one King and Lord, who is Jesus Christ/" To the pagan judge this was not merely blasphemy against the gods, but treason against the Emperor. Sometimes, but not often, the martyr's feelings got the better of him and he cursed the Emperor. "May you be punished," cried the dauntless Andronicus to Maximus, when the officers of the court had thrust between his lips the bread and meat of sacrifice, "may you be punished, bloody tyrant, you and they who have given you the power to defile me with your impious sacrifices. One day you will know what you have done to the servants of God." "Accursed scoundrel," said the judge, "dare you curse the Emperors who have given the world such long and profound peace?" "I have cursed them and I will curse them," replied Andronicus, "these public scourges, these drinkers of blood, who have turned the world upside down. May the immortal hand of God tolerate them no longer and punish their cruel amusements, that they may learn and know the evil they have done to God's servants." No doubt, most Christians agreed with the sentiments expressed by Andronicus, but they rarely gave expression to them. "I have